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determining a response content in accordance with said  
acquired status;

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4. A response apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said status acquired by said status acquisition means indicates there are a plurality of statuses that

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9. A response apparatus according to claim 8,  
wherein said response information output means includes  
addition means for adding an electronic mail header or  
an electronic mail footer to response information  
5 prepared by said response information preparation  
means.

10. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said response information output means outputs  
10 response information to a telephone.

11. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said telephone is a portable telephone.

12. A response apparatus according to claim 10,  
wherein said response information output means  
15 transmits response information to a management system.

13. A response apparatus according to claim 12,  
20 wherein said management system is a database management  
system.

14. A response apparatus according to claim 12,  
wherein said management system is a file management  
25 system.

15. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said response information output means

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transmits response information using a home page.

16. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said response information output means outputs  
response information using sound.

17. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said response information output means outputs  
response information to a pocket bell.

18. A response apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said response information output means outputs  
response information to a facsimile machine.

19. A response apparatus comprising:  
status acquisition means for acquiring a status;  
response procedure determination means for  
determining response procedures in accordance with said  
acquired status;

response information preparation means for  
preparing response information in accordance with said  
determined response procedures; and

response information output means for outputting  
said prepared response information in accordance with  
said determined response procedures.

20. A response apparatus according to claim 19,  
wherein said response procedure determination means

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26. A response apparatus according to claim 19,  
wherein said response procedure determination means  
designates a response timing.

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32. A response apparatus according to claim 19,  
further comprising: definition information storage  
means for storing definition information that defines a  
response procedure for a status, wherein said response  
procedure determination means determines a response  
25 procedure by referring to said definition information  
storage means.

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10           35. A response apparatus according to claim 32,  
wherein status data in said definition information also  
include a status that changes as time elapses.

15 36. A response apparatus according to claim 32,  
wherein statuses in said definition information also  
include a plurality of statuses that occur at the same  
time.

37. A response apparatus according to claim 19,  
20 further comprising response procedure designation means  
for designating a response procedure for each status,  
wherein, in consonance with said acquired status, said  
response procedure selection means selects a response  
procedure designated by said response procedure  
25 designation means.

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determining response procedures in accordance with said acquired status;

response information preparation means for preparing response information in accordance with said determined response procedures;

response information output means for outputting said prepared response information in accordance with said determined response procedures;

response result determination means for determining whether or not a response has failed as a result of outputting said response information; and

re-response control means for, when said response result determination means ascertains that said response has failed, permitting said response procedure determination means to determine re-response procedures, for permitting said response information preparation means to prepare re-response information in accordance with said re-response procedures, and for permitting said response information output means to output said re-response information.

39. A response apparatus according to claim 38, further comprising status acquisition means for acquiring a status, wherein said response procedure determination means determines a response procedure in consonance with said status that is acquired.

40. A response apparatus according to claim 38,



wherein said response procedure determination means selects a response procedure from a plurality of available response procedures.

5           41. A response apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said response result determination means employs a status after said response information has been output to determine whether or not a response has failed.

10           42. A response apparatus according to claim 41, wherein said status after said response information has been output is a status obtained when a predetermined time has elapsed following output of said response  
15 information.

20           43. A response apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said response procedure determination means determines as said re-response procedure a response procedure other than said response procedure that has failed.

25           44. A response apparatus comprising:  
response content determination means for determining a response content in accordance with said acquired status;

response information preparation means for preparing response information in accordance with said

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determined response content;

response information output means for outputting  
said prepared response information;

5 response addressee status acquisition means for  
acquiring a status for a response addressee;

determination means for employing said status at  
said response addressee that is acquired by said  
response addressee status acquisition means to  
determine whether or not a person at said response  
addressee is prepared to handle said response; and

10 re-response control means for, when said  
determination means determines that said person is not  
prepared to handle said response, permitting said  
response procedure determination means to determine re-  
15 response procedures, for permitting said response  
information preparation means to prepare re-response  
information in accordance with said re-response  
procedures, and for permitting said response  
information output means to output said re-response  
20 information.

45. A response apparatus according to claim 44,  
further comprising status acquisition means for  
acquiring a status, wherein said response procedure  
determination means determines a response procedure in  
consonance with said status that is acquired.

46. A response apparatus according to claim 44,

wherein said response procedure determination means selects a response procedure from a plurality of available response procedures.

5           47. A response apparatus according to claim 44,  
wherein, after said response information has been  
output, said determination means employs a reply from  
said response addressee to determine whether or not  
said response addressee is capable of handling a  
10           response.

48. A response apparatus according to claim 47,  
wherein, in consonance with whether said reply is  
transmitted within a predetermined period of time after  
15           said response information has been output, said  
determination means determines whether or not said  
response addressee is capable of handling a response.

49. A response apparatus according to claim 47,  
20           wherein, in consonance with whether or not the effect  
ability to cope with a response is described in said  
reply, said determination means determines whether or  
not said response addressee is capable of handling a  
response.

25           50. A response apparatus according to claim 44,  
wherein said response procedure determination means  
determines as said re-response procedure a response

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procedure other than said response procedure that has failed.

51. A response apparatus according to claim 44,  
5 wherein said determination means performs a  
determination before transmission of a response to a  
response addressee that is an object for said  
determination.

10 52. A response method comprising the steps of:  
acquiring a status;  
determining a response content in accordance with  
said acquired status;  
15 preparing response information in accordance with  
said determined response content; and  
outputting said prepared response information.

53. A response method according to claim 52,  
wherein at said response information preparation step  
20 said response information is prepared in a form  
corresponding to a medium at a response addressee.

54. A response method according to claim 52,  
further comprising the step of storing definition  
25 information that defines a response content for a  
status, wherein at said response content determination  
step a response content is determined by referring to  
said definition information.

55. A response method according to claim 52, wherein said status acquired at said status acquisition step indicates there are a plurality of statuses that occur at the same time.

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56. A response method according to claim 52, wherein at response content preparation step, response content information preparation data storage means is referred to in which is stored fixed information for each portion of a content that is prepared, and said fixed information is employed to prepare a response content.

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57. A response method according to claim 52, wherein at said response content preparation step, response content preparation rule storage means is referred to in which is stored a response content preparation rule, and said response content preparation rule is employed to prepare a response content.

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58. A response method according to claim 52, wherein said response information preparation step includes:

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a text preparation step of preparing text of said response information; and

an additional sentence preparation step of preparing an opening sentence or a closing sentence.

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59. A response method according to claim 52, wherein at said response information output step said response information is transmitted using electronic mail.

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60. A response method according to claim 59, wherein said response information output step includes an addition step of adding an electronic mail header or an electronic mail footer to response information prepared at said response information preparation step.

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61. A response method according to claim 52, wherein at said response information output step response information is output to a telephone.

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62. A response method according to claim 61, wherein said telephone is a portable telephone.

63. A response method according to claim 52, wherein at said response information output step response information is transmitted to a management system.

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64. A response method according to claim 63, wherein said management system is a database management system.

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65. A response method according to claim 63,

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wherein said management system is a file management system.

5 66. A response method according to claim 52,  
wherein at said response information output step  
response information is transmitted using a home page.

10 67. A response method according to claim 52,  
wherein at said response information output step  
response information is output using sound.

15 68. A response method according to claim 52,  
wherein at said response information output step  
response information is output to a pocket bell.

69. A response method according to claim 52,  
wherein at said response information output step  
response information is output to a facsimile machine.

20 70. A response method comprising the steps of:  
acquiring a status;  
determining response procedures in accordance with  
said acquired status;  
preparing response information in accordance with  
25 said determined response procedures; and  
outputting said prepared response information in  
accordance with said determined response procedures.

71. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response procedure is selected from a plurality of  
available response procedures.

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72. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response procedure is determined in consonance with the  
degree of importance of said status.

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73. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step  
whether or not a response is to be transmitted is  
determined.

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74. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response content is designated.

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75. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response medium is designated.

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76. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response addressee is designated.

77. A response method according to claim 70,



wherein at said response procedure determination step a response timing is designated.

78. A response method according to claim 70,  
5 wherein at said response procedure determination step a language type is designated.

79. A response method according to claim 70,  
10 wherein at said response procedure determination step the degree of detail in an explanation is determined.

80. A response method according to claim 70,  
15 wherein at said response procedure determination step a condition for transmission of a response is determined.

81. A response method according to claim 70,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a re-response procedure is determined.

20 82. A response method according to claim 81, wherein at said response procedure determination step the number of re-responses is determined.

25 83. A response method according to claim 70, further comprising: a definition information storage step of storing definition information that defines a response procedure for a status, wherein at said response procedure determination step a response

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procedure is determined by referring to said definition information storage step.

5 84. A response method according to claim 83, wherein status data in said definition information indicate a single status.

10 85. A response method according to claim 83, wherein status data in said definition information also include a combination composed of a plurality of statuses.

15 86. A response method according to claim 83, wherein status data in said definition information also include a status that changes as time elapses.

20 87. A response method according to claim 83, wherein statuses in said definition information also include a plurality of statuses that occur at the same time.

25 88. A response method according to claim 70, further comprising a response procedure designation step of designating a response procedure for each status, wherein, in consonance with said acquired status, at said response procedure selection step a response procedure is selected that has been designated at said response procedure designation step.

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preparing response information in accordance with  
5 said determined response procedures;

determining whether or not a response has failed  
as a result of outputting said response information;  
and

20 90. A response method according to claim 89,  
further comprising a status acquisition step of  
acquiring a status, wherein at said response procedure  
determination step a response procedure is determined  
in consonance with said status that is acquired.

91. A response method according to claim 89,  
wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response procedure is selected from a plurality of

available response procedures.

92. A response method according to claim 89,  
wherein at said response result determination step a  
5 status after said response information has been output  
is employed to determine whether or not a response has  
failed.

93. A response method according to claim 92,  
10 wherein said status after said response information has  
been output is a status obtained when a predetermined  
time has elapsed following output of said response  
information.

94. A response method according to claim 89,  
15 wherein at said response procedure determination step a  
response procedure other than said response procedure  
that has failed is determined as said re-response  
procedure.

95. A response method comprising the steps of:  
determining a response content in accordance with  
said acquired status;  
25 preparing response information in accordance with  
said determined response content;  
outputting said prepared response information;  
acquiring a status at a response addressee;  
employing said status at said response addressee

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not said response addressee is capable of handling a response.

99. A response method according to claim 98,  
5 wherein, at said determination step, whether or not  
said response addressee is capable of handling a  
response is determined in consonance with whether said  
reply is transmitted within a predetermined period of  
time after said response information has been output.

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100. A response method according to claim 98,  
wherein, at said determination step, whether or not  
said response addressee is capable of handling a  
response is determined in consonance with whether or  
15 not the effect ability to cope with a response is  
described in said reply.

101. A response method according to claim 95,  
wherein, at said response procedure determination step,  
20 a response procedure other than said response procedure  
that has failed is determined as said re-response  
procedure.

102. A response method according to claim 95,  
25 wherein said determination is performed before  
transmission of a response to a response addressee that  
is an object for said determination.

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103. A computer-readable storage medium in which is stored a response program for controlling a computer to transmit a response, said program comprising codes for enabling said computer to perform the steps of:

- 5        acquiring a status;
- determining a response content in accordance with said acquired status;
- preparing response information in accordance with said determined response content; and
- 10        outputting said prepared response information.

104. A computer-readable storage medium in which is stored a response program for controlling a computer to transmit a response, said program comprising codes

15        for enabling said computer to perform the steps of:

- acquiring a status;
- determining response procedures in accordance with said acquired status;
- preparing response information in accordance with
- 20        said determined response procedures; and
- outputting said prepared response information in accordance with said determined response procedures.

105. A computer-readable storage medium in which is stored a response program for controlling a computer to transmit a response, said program comprising codes for enabling said computer to perform the steps of:

- determining response procedures in accordance with

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preparing response information in accordance with  
said determined response procedures;

determining whether or not a response has failed  
as a result of outputting said response information;  
and

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determining a response content in accordance with  
said acquired status;

outputting said prepared response information;  
acquiring a status at a response addressee;  
employing said status at said response addressee



that is acquired at said response addressee status acquisition step to determine whether or not a person at said response addressee is prepared to handle said response; and

5           determining, when it is ascertained at said determination step that said person is not prepared to handle said response, re-response procedures at said response procedure determination step, preparing re-response information at said response information preparation step in accordance with said re-response procedures, and outputting said re-response information at said response information output step.

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